

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

Archived Gardening Publications

Archived USU Extension Publications

9-7-2009

Fall Planting

Larry A. Sagers
Utah State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histgarden



Part of the [Horticulture Commons](#)

Warning: The information in this series may be obsolete. It is presented here for historical purposes only. For the most up to date information please visit [The Utah State University Cooperative Extension Office](#)

Recommended Citation

Sagers, Larry A., "Fall Planting" (2009). *Archived Gardening Publications*. Paper 28.
https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histgarden/28

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Archived USU Extension Publications at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Archived Gardening Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.



Fall Planting

Utah State
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Thanksgiving Point Office
3003 North Thanksgiving Way
Lehi, Utah 84043-3740
(801) 768-2300



LARRY A. SAGERS
REGIONAL HORTICULTURIST
UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

Fall Garden Care

- Gardeners are always looking for ways to reduce the stress of spring rush.

Fall Garden Care

- Tilling gardens, pruning fruit trees, planting vegetables, installing flower beds, and 101 other activities leave little time during the spring season.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- One way to beat the rush is fall planting of trees and shrubs.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Fall planting has long been advocated by nurseries, and research shows it is an excellent way to establish plants.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Plants purchased and planted now have a season's head start on those planted next spring. They have been through the initial survival process and will transplant well to your yard.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Think how much less gardening pressure you feel right now - then imagine how people at the nurseries feel.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Busy spring Saturdays are successful because of the days and nights worked to get the plants ordered, shipped, unloaded, displayed and sold. Spring leaves nurseries little time to do anything but sell plants.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Visit them now for a more leisurely selection process and some excellent advice from a Utah Certified Professional.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- This training program sponsored by the Utah Nursery and Landscape Association provides training and standards for member nurseries. Their advice helps you select the best plants and install them correctly.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Soil temperatures favor planting right now. In the spring, plants are often installed in cold, wet soil, and consequently root growth is minimal.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Right now the opposite is true.
The soil will stay warm for several weeks or months.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Roots on woody plants continue to grow long after the top has gone dormant. Moderating temperatures and fall rains, with any luck, further reduce stress to the plant as it goes into dormancy.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- It is ironic that the most tender part of the plant is the roots. This physiological phenomenon also affects the nursery industry.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Overwintering plants in pots means they must be covered with a deep, insulating mulch or in some cases covered with insulating foams or other materials.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- This keeps the root balls from drying out and being exposed to low winter temperatures.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- This is an additional expense that nurseries would prefer to avoid, so bargains are often available right now.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Choose plant materials carefully. Even though planting weather is ideal and you may find a bargain, it is no bargain if it is not the plant that you want.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- The selection is probably not as great as it was earlier in the spring, but there are still plenty of plants to choose from.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- The selection is probably not as great as it was earlier in the spring, but there are still plenty of plants to choose from.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Planting techniques have always been controversial. There are dozens of recipes and ideas, but common sense prevails over any “recipe.”

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Prepare planting holes by digging a hole wider, but not deeper, than the container or root ball.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- For many years researchers advocated digging holes deeper than the root ball and backfilling.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- This is an ineffective method, as the soil always settles and the tree sinks below the correct planting depth.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- In most cases leave the soil underneath the root ball undisturbed.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Spend your time and effort digging the hole at least a couple of times wider than the root ball and removing trash, debris or other materials.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Soil amendments are also controversial. If you have good, high quality topsoil, there is not much need to try and improve it.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- If your soil is less than adequate, choose your soil amendments carefully. Amend heavy clay soils with small amounts of coarse organic matter to improve the soil granulation, drainage and aeration.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Peat moss is not satisfactory, as it holds water even better than the heavy, clay soil. Peat moss is an excellent amendment for sandy soils, as are other composted bark products available at local nurseries.

Planting Trees & Shrubs

- Water the trees well but don't keep them constantly wet. Fertilizing at this time of year is not needed or recommended, as the top of the tree is not growing.

Care of Roses

- Check roses to make certain they are correctly winterized.

Care of Roses

- Selectively pruning the tops of the plants keeps them from breaking down with the snow and whipping in the wind.

Care of Roses

- These types of damage are often just as devastating as the cold temperatures.

Care of Roses

- Remove the top branches where the blooms were formed. These candelabras are likely to catch the snow and blow in the wind. This uproots the plants or breaks the canes.

Care of Roses

- Cut the plants back to about four feet high but delay the final pruning until buds swell next spring. In high wind areas, tie the canes together with twine.

Care of Roses

- Form mulch mounds over the roses to prevent severe winter damage.

Care of Roses

- Use soil, compost, wood chips, bark, or other material. Do not use straw that contains grain as it may attract mice that feed on the canes.

Care of Roses

- Mound the mulch up over the top of the plant to protect the crown and bud areas. Colder winter temperatures require deeper mounds.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- Turfgrass takes more of the garden area than any other crop but quality is often neglected. Several fall care tasks are important. Do these for the greenest lawn in the neighborhood next year.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- The first task is to provide the needed nutrients for the grass. Grass is a perennial plant with a very extensive root system. This enables the turf to extract many needed nutrients from the soil.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- The exception is nitrogen that needs to be added on a regular basis to keep the grass growing well and to keep it healthy.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- Nitrogen applied in the fall is not going to green up the lawn right now. The roots will absorb the nutrient and the grass will start to grow early in the season next year.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- Clean up fallen leaves before winter because layers of leaves on the lawn keep sunlight from reaching the grass so the grass is smothered and dies out.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- If the lawn is compacted or has a heavy layer of thatch consider aerating the turf. The soil needs to be moist but avoid trying to aerate muddy lawns.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- One last mowing after the leaves are cleaned up is cosmetically beneficial.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- Closer mowing is often recommended to prevent turf diseases but is not merited in our area because the diseases never cause serious problems unless the turf is excessively long.

Fall Care of Turfgrass

- Preventative fungicidal applications are not recommended unless your turf has a serious ongoing problem with diseases.

Sprinkling Systems

- Winterize the sprinkler system by turning off the water on the stop and waste valve. Run the clock through several cycles so each plunger opens and closes and expels water in the valves.

Sprinkling Systems

- Clocks do not usually need special care so unless there are special instructions simply turn them to the inactive cycle for the winter.

Sprinkling Systems

- Turn off mechanical clocks to avoid excess wear on the components.

Sprinkling Systems

- Well designed sprinkler systems have automatic drains. Professionals purge the lines with compressed air to remove water that remains if drains are not functioning or if pipes have settled.

Plant Bulbs & Fall Flowers



Fall Flowers

- The secret of a beautiful spring garden is to get the plants well established in the fall. Waiting until the first killing frost of the season is not necessary.

Fall Flowers

- Nothing is quite as discouraging as trying to clear the snow away to plant the spring bulbs and other flowers.

Fall Flowers

- The salvation of spring gardens is the plants we grow there. These are a diverse group.

Fall Flowers

- Some are winter annuals, some are biennials that take two years to complete their life cycles and some are spring-blooming perennials that come back again and again.

Fall Flowers

- All share a common characteristic of being able to survive the winter and grow in early spring.

Fall Flowers

- They finally burst forth with brilliant color to paint an exquisite spring garden.

